



# Barony of Ramshaven Herald

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## Welcome to the Ramshaven Herald!

Greetings and Hello from your Office of the Chronicler and welcome to my final edition of the Herald as your Baronial Chronicler. Thanks again to Odette de Saint Remy for all her assistance this year.

*Ceolwyn æt Fealhdune, Chronicler*

[elizabeth.vanrij@gmail.com](mailto:elizabeth.vanrij@gmail.com)

## Greetings from their Excellencies

Unto the noble Populace of the fine barony of RamsHaven do Their Excellencies, Kolbjorn Gothi and Brehyres Wencenedl extend their warmest Greetings:

We now enter the days sometimes referred to in our Society as the "Season of Peace." Although styles come and go, it is not unknown to suspend tournaments in the short days of the year, until after 12th Night. This is in keeping with a medieval concept. In 1063, Count Baldwin of Hainault and Bishop Drogo of Terouanne (modernly in southern Belgium and northern France respectively) "in cooperation with the people of the land" signed a document extending what had come to be known as the "Truce of God" to the Christmas season: from the beginning of Advent to the octave of Epiphany (otherwise known as 12th Night) private war and other hostilities were formally ceased. This practice spread from France to England, Italy and Germany as well, and remained the custom into at least the 13th century.

Therefore this is a good time to turn our thoughts and reflections towards some of the gentler aspects of Chivalry. Foremost, of course, is courtesy. Courtesy is the cornerstone of our Society, as Corpora tells us that the two basic requirements for participation at events are pre-17th century clothing and that we "behave as ladies or gentlemen." Courtesy is more than polished manners (although they're certainly part of it); courtesy is respect for others which grows where there is genuine interest in other people. Take the time to learn the courtesies and sumptuary customs of our kingdom, but also take care when reacting to instances of discourtesy. To respond in kind to poor behaviour only reduces one's own virtue.

A second of the gentler knightly virtues is largess, or generosity. Like courtesy, largess is essentially kindness with shoes on. It has been said that, 'largess is the coin that keeps the SCA going' as we are a society built on people donating their time and their talents. We were very impressed with the generosity of those who showed up at very nearly the crack of dawn recently to help set up for Crown Tournament. Your actions helped make the day special for everyone else. We are also looking forward to largess of another kind in conjunction with the Toys for Tots Tournament and the Food Bank drive planned for Wassail.

We wish each and every one you the very best as we enter the holiday season.

## Sumptuary Courtesies and Customs

By Mistress Marian of Heatherdale, Trillium Herald Emeritus

Customs and courtesies in our SCA experience act to set us apart from our mundane world; we seek to recreate a more polite and noble society, along with the arts, crafts and skills of a bygone age. Here are some basic customs and courtesies to get you acquainted with life in Ealdormere.

### How to Act When No One Is Around

1) Don't touch other people's things without asking.

Sounds simple, but it's hard to remember when you see a beautiful piece of embroidery or metalwork just sitting on an Arts & Sciences display table. Assume even the most plain item is a treasure to its owner, and don't move or handle things without permission. If you must move something to get it out of the way, place it somewhere within sight or give it to the Gatekeeper ('Troll') or Event Steward ('Autocrat').

2) Don't walk through another person's designated space.

Whether it's a roped off campsite at a camping event or an obvious personal seating spot in a hall, treat it as someone else's home. Ask before you enter, and if no one's there, go around rather than through. Popular ways to ask entry are "Hail (to) the camp!" or "Greetings, may I enter?" (at camping events) and "Good day, may I approach?" (at indoor areas). This is true even if you are a herald on official business.

3) Don't turn a blind eye.

If you see something that should not be going on, whether it's children playing with dangerous objects or someone moving something suspiciously, be polite but take action. Approach them and ask if there's anything the matter, or state your concern politely and ask for clarification. If your concerns aren't satisfied, tell someone in authority like the Event Steward or Gatekeeper.

### How To Treat Each Other

1) Use polite medieval forms of address where possible.

Remember, everyone is as noble as you are in the SCA. Using these terms in everyday speech also adds to the atmosphere of an SCA event. Polite forms of personal address include:

**"milord/milady"**

(for general use or for someone without an Award of Arms),

**"(My) Lord/Lady"**

(again, for general use or for someone with an AoA),

**"good gentle(s)"**

(general use, either gender).

2) Respect personal space.

The thing to remember in all social situations is that not everyone is comfortable with extended physical contact. Do not assume that you may put your arm around a new acquaintance, or that you may hold their hand while you speak. An acceptable form of greeting is to bow or curtsy without touching, or to briefly "shake" hands in the Medieval fashion: the lady extends her hand (palm facing down) and the man holds it lightly in his own (palm facing up), bows slightly and then releases the lady's hand. It is also fairly common for a man to lightly kiss the top of a lady's fingers while he bows,

but this is by no means necessary.

3) Be supportive and offer constructive criticism.

No one is perfect, and we are a society based on shared knowledge and support. If you see someone in difficulty, offer to assist. If you see someone doing something inappropriate, politely remind them (with a smile) of what is appropriate. If you are given the chance to critique someone's work or skills, do so with an eye to how they may improve, rather than what is badly done. Pay sincere compliments where they are due, and don't support hurtful gossip.

### **How To Treat Royalty and Others of Rank**

1) Reverence to the Crown and Throne.

There is a tradition in Ealdormere (originating in the Middle Kingdom) that all people should make a reverence (i.e. short bow or curtsy) whenever they pass by the King/Queen or their Thrones. This is a show of respect, and helps to set apart our Royalty from the rest of the populace. It may be as simple as a quick bob of the head as you walk by, or you can stop and quietly make a bow or curtsy before you move on. Alternatively, if you are seated when the Royalty enter the room, or pass by your location, it is polite to stand up to acknowledge their presence.

2) Use appropriate titles.

If you have a chance to address the Royalty, Baronage or Peers (ie. Laurels, Pelicans or Knights), try to use the correct title. If you can't remember it, you can always use "Good Milord/Milady".

#### **Royalty:**

- King/Queen: "Your Majesty"
- Prince/Princess: "Your Highness"

#### **Former Royalty:**

- Counts/Countesses (have been Royalty once): "Your Excellency"
- Dukes/Duchesses (have been Royalty twice or more): "Your Grace"

#### **Peers:**

- Laurels (arts&sciences):  
"Master [name]", "Mistress/Dame [name]"
- Pelicans (long service):  
"Master [name]", "Mistress/Dame [name]"
- Knights (the 'Chivalry'):  
"Sir [name]", "Dame [name]"  
(Note: female knights often are called "Sir".)

#### **Barons / Baronesses:**

- "Your Excellency"
- "Lord [Name of Barony]", "Lady [Name of Barony]"

### **Court Behaviour**

1) During Court: be quiet and respectful.

Court is a unique part of SCA life. While it is a place where people can be recognized for their service and skill, many Royals also try to make it entertaining for the populace as well. Sometimes, though, it can be long and admittedly dull. Remember that the Royalty may not be very comfortable with public speaking and this may be quite difficult for them. Be quiet and don't heckle, even if others are yelling out things which you think are funny. If you're not enjoying court, quietly leave to keep the noise down. As a herald, you may be asked to help with Court – do your best to make the Royals' pronouncements heard clearly, and don't try to embellish them or make them funny.

## Summary

As you spend more time in the SCA, you will begin to learn other customs in Ealdormere which apply to certain situations (ie. while in combat, when dancing, during a Moot) or for certain individuals. But following these basic courtesies will hold you in good stead in any situation, and you will help enhance everyone's experience in Ealdormere.

## Who are the Frisians?

By Ceolwyn æt Fealhdune

While the Vikings, one of the most well known Scandinavian exports, are famous or infamous if you will, another vibrant and violent group on mainland Europe, the Frisians eventually slipped into obscurity without a single opera or comic strip. As one of their descendents, I am all too familiar with the blank stares I get when I mention my ethnicity as being half Dutch and half Frisian.

The Frisians are a Germanic ethnic group living in coastal parts of what is modern day Netherlands, Denmark and Germany. Like the Vikings they were a travelling people, visiting or migrating to midland and coastal England, Scandinavia, Poland, the Baltic States, and some seafarers may have travelled to Ireland, Asturias and Galicia. The Frisians were one of several tribes that belonged to the Inguaeones which included the Jutes, Angles, and the Saxons. Of these tribes the Frisians were closest culturally and linguistically to the Saxon, and today Frisian is linguistically the closest language to modern English. Incidentally, the name Inguaeones is derived from the god Inguz (another name for the Germanic god Freyr) as the Frisians believed they descended from him.

Also like the Vikings, the Frisians were...quarrelsome. An ongoing thorn in the side of the Romans, Merovingians and Carolingians, they took on the Romans over an unfair tax hike by hanging the tax collector and winning a subsequent battle, and the respect of the Romans. They were noted by Constantius Chlorus as being among the pirates that were raiding Roman Britain – interestingly, while other Frisians were defending Hadrian's wall for the Romans.

I will skip long stories of battles with the Romans, and how the rising sea levels forced the Frisians to move out of an area and back into it in the 5<sup>th</sup> Century (let's just say there was a lot of general instability in the area) and I will move forward to the SCA period. By now the Angles, Saxons, Jutes and a Frisian fraction had crossed the North Sea and established the Anglo-Saxon empire (note we didn't get a by-line in the Empire name; the Jutes got ripped off too). It is believed that the Frisians colonized the county of Kent in southeast England. DNA testing is showing a genetic connection between the English of East Anglia and the Northern Midlands, with the Frisians of the Netherlands.

At that time there was rapid expansion and a strong increase in trade. At its peak, in the 7th century, the "Frisian Empire" consisted of the coastal areas from north Belgium to southern Denmark and controlled a large part of the North Sea trade routes from Friesland to England, France, Scandinavia and northwest Russia.

Then along came the Franks, and the long struggle between Christian Frank and Heathen Frisian began.

Christianizing Frisians was originally quite unsuccessful and various monks were murdered or banished, such as Saint Boniface, who was murdered near Dokkum. Another notable figure was the heathen king Radbod (679 - 719 A.D.) who is considered one of the greatest folk heroes of the Frisians, defending Frisian freedom against the invading Franks.

The Frisians were one of the last groups to be Christianized in Western Europe with the change occurring during the Frankish occupation of the 8<sup>th</sup> Century under Charlemagne. Originally King Radbod had defeated Charles 'the Hammer' Martel in

714, but twenty years after this victory, Martel subjugated the entire Frisian empire. It was not until the early 9th century that the Frisians regained independence and by this point Christianity had been adopted by most Frisians.

As time continued, most of Frisia became dominated by its expanding neighbours, the Saxons and the Franks, and had culturally shrunk down to the province of Friesland where the West Frisian language is still spoken. The Frisians are currently revitalizing the language with new newspapers and radio stations and the creation of the Frisia Project at the University of Amsterdam for the study the ancient history of Friesland. Frisians are considered by other Netherlanders to be exceptionally stubborn and proud, so I think that despite their reduced numbers, they will still be around for a long time.

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## Baronial Regnum

The Baronial Regnum can also be located at the [Baronial website](#).

### Baron

Kolbjorn skattkaupandi  
[skattkaupandi@gmail.com](mailto:skattkaupandi@gmail.com)  
519-772-5426

### Baroness

Wencenedl of Rokesburg  
[eliskimo@rogers.com](mailto:eliskimo@rogers.com)  
519-772-5426

### Seneschal

Rylyn Buchanan  
[patchett@sympatico.ca](mailto:patchett@sympatico.ca)

### Armoured Marshal:

Yoshikuri Nagayori go-taisho  
[ticat1@hotmail.com](mailto:ticat1@hotmail.com)  
519-208-2086

### Exchequer

Diego de Montoya  
519-763-4627

### Chronicler:

Ceolwyn æt Fealhdune  
[elizabeth.vanrij@gmail.com](mailto:elizabeth.vanrij@gmail.com)

### A&S Minister:

Marguerite de Champs  
[fayerandle@hotmail.com](mailto:fayerandle@hotmail.com)

### Herald:

Dietrich von Sacshen  
[general.keegan@hotmail.com](mailto:general.keegan@hotmail.com)

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## In Our Barony....

*Wassail* December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010  
Hosted by the Canton of Bryniau Tywynnog (Tavistock, ON)

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